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TERMS.

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THE FORGOTTEN TROTH-PLIGHT.

It was the secret hour of twilight, and the dews of evening were falling on the odorous roses that blossomed over the portico of a lovely cottage, bosomed in a pleasant valley, near to the great city. The jasmine, the clematis, and the barbed briony, combined to shed beauty and sweet breaths, while the wild wind played with a low murmur under the trees, and carried a soft and gentle influence to the heart, disposing it to tenderness, and to appreciate and feel all that was lovely and beautiful in nature, and in humanity. It was an evening in which the stars sung holily in the heavenly skies above.

Beneath this portico, with eyes at times turned upon each other's faces in rapture, and anon wandering with an untold delight down the fair walks, and over the lawns and flower-beds of the garden, there stood two young people, a youth and a maiden, their hearts filled with love and a sense of beauty. To the left a dense grove pictured to the mind an imaginative charm, as the song of the nightingale came at intervals upon the ear. To the right lay a stretching lake, and beyond that again were a row of tall and nodding poplars. Thick masses of foliage bounded the extreme end, and behind the houses rose the swelling heights of Hampshire.

The two, young, ardent, and full of an unspeaking love for each other, felt at that silent and delicious hour, that fauture of the soul which can only be known by those who have experienced the first great delirium of that confession, in whose mutual worship of each other the tremulous agonies and delights of the soul are so deeply felt.

"Emmeline," he whispered, after a pause, "this sweet scene, with its calm and repose, is an apt image of that peace which we now feel after the confession has been made and reciprocated. It is sweet to know now, that no doubts hang over us to cloud our future, our parents smile upon the prospects of our union. Tell me, then, sweet girl, have you any after-thought upon your mind? have you any scruple upon your heart?" and he bent down his noble, handsome face to her own, and looked upon her with the deepest affection.

She lifted up her own sweet face to his, and in it was a smile struggling with a shade of melancholy, which latter she seemed to be desirous of hiding.

"No," she replied, yet in a hesitating tone; "no Horace, none—that is—I would feel none, for my heart tells me that you love me, and yet tranquil as this scene is now at this moment, it seems that some cloud lowers below yonder cloudless horizon that may lift up ominously and overshadow us both."

"Emmeline!" he reproachfully, and in a low voice said, "do you then doubt me? Have you then really a fear?"

"I am childish, Horace," replied Emmeline, "and I cannot account for my impression. I ought not to doubt or fear, and I do not believe I do. Perhaps it is from the excess of my joy; for but just now I know not what could be more blissful than my sensation. Perhaps dear Horace," she tenderly, and with charming ardor added, "it arises from a vague fear of your absence."

"My absence, Emmeline!" he ejaculated with a smile; "what can you have to dream from that, since this happiness is connected with your own happiness? It is on business of our marriage that I am bound for London."

"London!" she said with a shudder; "yes, that is the form that my fear takes. That is my shadow which stands across my path. It is a dim misgiving from that visit to London we shall see the dark sorrow that ——, but pardon me, I throw a sadness upon you which you ought not to feel; I am grateful to you, Horace!" she continued with enthusiasm; "I love you, and believe you."

"Thanks, sweet Emmeline," replied Horace, passing his arm around her, and imprinting a kiss upon her brow. "Believe me implicitly, for I am vowed to you, and I put this ring upon your hand as a pledge of our troth-plight;" and as he placed it on her finger he lifted her hand to his lips, and then drawing her towards him, they descended a step from the porch, and walked slowly on towards the garden path.

Horace Langford was the son of a wealthy gentleman, who had lived in that neighbourhood on his own property, as his forefathers (who had risen up from a humble trading establishment in the city to a position of wealth and eminence) had for generations before him. Horace was an only son, and from his talents, education, and prospective wealth, was likely to be one of the most successful young men of his day. With such a peerless creature as Emmeline, his equal in station and riches, blest with grace, beauty and accomplishments, he seemed to be one likely to enjoy a greater share of human happiness than generally falls to the lot of men.

We have, therefore, laid before the reader the relative position of the young people at the time our story opens, and we have yet to see whether the vague fears of Emmeline were justified, or whether her doubts were an illusion. Horace possessed every quality that could be desired, save that he was plastic and impulsive, and his moral courage was not always proof against the entreaties or jests of his friends; and he had more than once to regret that his resolutions were so weak as to be only excuses for doing that which he had promised himself not to do, as if he was only an example of that miserable imbecility sensible men will reduce themselves to, in order to show that the rule is actually the exception, while at the same time this erratic exception is an undeniable rule, and that man is a contrariety.

The troth was plighted solemnly—the vows were breathed as solemly; yet, had Emmeline looked into her lover's face at that instant, the pale moon would have shown on his brow the reflection of that shadow which he had observed upon Emmeline's. Whether it was a remembrance that came from the past; whether it was an untold dread of the realities of the future, we do not pretend to know; but ere she had turned up her loving face to his own, in all the gracious confidence of a heart that believed in spite of fate, she saw not the shadow on his forehead, but a face manly and handsome, beaming with rapture upon her.

They returned to the house. The night had come on. The night wind swept among the flowers, and shook the odors out of their fairy bells. Moon and stars were up, and the night was like to that we can imagine to have been the first in Paradise. Over their wine sat the two paternal magnates within the elegent parlor. Side by side sat the twin disposers of the young destinies—the potential mammas. The converse was presided over by Plutus; for gold, and broad acres, and brocaded silks, and binns of old Port, and horses, chariots, wedding garments, presents, &c., constituted the staple of the conversation.

For a time, too, the young lovers sat together, "half embraced and half retiring from the glowing arm." Then a whusper from Horace made the girl go to her piano, and her voice rose up in a sweet hymn to the evening, as if St. Cecilia herself was in one of her rapt devotional moments pouring fourth a music of gratulation, mingled with supplication, to the divinity, who had given her senses and a soul to comprehend the great loveliness of existence.

The morning of Horace's departure came and went, and he with it, after leave-taking, fresh vows, and blessings on both sides. Still at the parting the shadow was on the soul of Emmeline; but on the frank and open brow of Horace there sat no care. With embraces, and kisses, and reverend promises of never-dying love, he parted from her, and before many days were over he was in the capital. Before many days he had held revel with his old companions. This was wrong as the most indifferent man would say.

Unhappily, the evil genius of Horace came to him in the shape of a beautiful and profligate actress, whom he had met with during a sojourn in London some two years previously. Without their being anything absolutely criminal about their acquaintance at the time, he had plunged into debt and extravagence for her, which had greatly embarrassed him, though since he had relieved himself from all his liabilities.

What would you have? Young, frank, generous, and inexperienced in the wiles of artful women, it flattered his vanity to be caressed by one so beautiful, so brilliant, witty, and gay as she was. Feted by titled men, and with her levees attended by a string of youthful coxcombs, it made him giddy when he thought this brilliant creature showed him more of favor and patronage than she did others. The time, however, came when he was disabused of his frantic adoration. An exposure took place, in which she was shown to be the profligate she was. That which added to her notoriety, and made her more fascinating to the "man about town," disgusted him, and he retired, with wounded heart and sorrowful feelings to the country. There he renewed his acquaintance of childhood with Emmeline, and learnt to love her. The result we have shown the reader.

By a chance, on this last visit to London,—by a chance or by a design, no matter which, this artful and perfidious creature, knowing that he was wealthy and susceptible, having lost some part of her influence, determined to mould him to her purpose. They met. They grew acquainted. The story of the past she contrived to gloss over; she made it appear that she was a slandered and injured creature. His chivalry, his vanity, his passions were roused, and ere many days had passed he was her devoted slave; and she played with the feelings of the vacillating youth till his heart was tortured with feelings of rage and remorse. He spent large sums of money upon her, while she in secret laughed at him as an infatuated fool, with whom she could do anything. She had marked him for her own—her prey. She did not know as yet that there was such a person as Emmeline She had long ceased to believe in the influence of a virtuous and lovely young woman. On the stage she enraptured all hearts, by the utterance of those splendid truths, to the proof of which she was a living lie.

At first he wrote to Emmeline daily letters, teeming with affection. Then these grew less frequent. When he found at one time that a week had passed by without having replied to her last, a pang of pain shot through his bosom, and some days passed by before he knew how to write, and its tone was so strange and incoherent, that a dismay seized Emmeline's heart. Her fears were not so groundless after all.

His stay was to have been prolonged to some four or six weeks only, and soon two months were gone. This was terrible, but he was in the toils. This giddy vortex of pleasure, dissipation, and riot, fastened upon him, and this terrible Lamia, this woman who might be likened to a beautiful fiend, half woman and half serpent, seemed to have wound her deadly coils round him, and to have cast such spells upon him, that he at last forgot—no, he did not forget the sweet, meek face of his love, the pleasant, venerable and affectionate smiles of his parents, but he refused to remember them. At the gaming-table, which he now frequented, at the orgie in the theatre, leaning on the bosom of the Delilah that thus enslaved him, these dim faces would come like those of phantoms, phantoms of creatures that he had slaughtered, and that had left him a murderer—then would he seize his glass, drink off the fiery wine, grow for a time frenzied till a fresh group of folly and vice closed round him, and on went the bachanal, the prodigal, thro' the phases of his career, like a madman welcoming the spirits that tortured him.

Like a pale and fading lily, so grew Emmeline now. She seemed to have heard her knell, to have known her fate, and to have resigned herself to its inexorable decrees. She excused him, and she pardoned him, but no hope, no imaginative faculty could make her believe that she was loved no more by one who had now for so long a time forgotten her—by one who had forgotten the troth-plight, the day of the marriage, his home, friends and all. At last no letters came, and a gulf of time and oblivion began to meet itself gradually between him and them. Nearer to the brink of the everlasting pit, able to glance down its horrible sides, and to its fathomless depths of horror and despair, the victim appeared to have been led. There is but one way to save such a man, and that the rudest of all. To maim, to wound him—flog—anything is the only method of arousing him out of this frightful sleep.

At last, full of anxiety and dread, his father sought him and found him—in the company of the dazzling harpy: and then for the first time did the temptress—now turned into a figress—know that there was a guardian angel, an Emmeline living, one perhaps that might step in between her and her present idol—the young, the rich, the handsome, the plastic liberal fool, that showered gold at her feet, clad her in silks, and loved her as if he were a maniac, and this love his ruling passion. She departed. The father and the son were left alone together.

How changed had Horace grown. The grace of his early innocence had fled. The kind nature had become fierce and impulsive. The gray hairs of his father inspired him with fear and dread, instead of reverence or love. The old man said,

"Emmeline is dying, Horace, will you not see her before she passes away? The heart of your mother is breaking, my son; will you not go and close her eyes?" Those words woke up his feelings. In one stormy burst of anguish and tears the fetters of vice were broken asunder. He knelt in abasement and tears. If Emmeline should die, what would he be—what would he think of himself!

He received a letter from the actress the next day. It was bitter, mocking, and scornful. It laughed at him—it insulted him. It called him child and fool. And the brilliant baseness had robbed him of jewels, money—everything that her rapacious hands could touch. She knew that Horace had a high sense of honor. She knew that such a thing existed, by rumor, herself; poor wretch, the perfume of her innocence, the remembrance of her days of honor, was so blighted the former, the latter so distant, that she scarcely believed she had ever been pure; and she said, "I can keep all I have taken, with impunity, for he will not prosecute me. I need dread no police, but I will make myself secure, notwithstanding." But she had reckoned wrongly.

Horace was robbed, and would have borne it. She insulted him, and it roused his anger. Before two days she was in a prison beating hemp. The gay beauty was defiled with disgrace. She had already become poluted by vice. Horace contrasted the two women together, Felicité, the actress, and Emmeline. O, God, how his heart ached under the insult he had offered the dove that had sought for shelter in his heart. His father wisely left him to remorse and tears. He thought it would be better to leave him to himself.

"Will you return, Horace?" he asked him a few days after.

"Wherefore, my father?" demanded Horace, gloomily.

"Have you forgotten your troth-plight?" was the question that followed, and it jarred upon the heart of the young man who had been so rudely treated by his own passions, as if a moral electricity had gone through his being.

"She says, Horace, that when the snows of the winter fall they will shroud her. Before the next spring comes the grass will grow on her grave. Will you not look into her forgiving eyes before they close to you for ever?"

The balance trembled, but the last word decided him. They were pregnant with a solemn meaning, and as solemnly did he comprehend it.

"I will," he said; and went.

Day after day, and night after night, he sat by Emmeline's side. The snows fell, and she lived on: The spring came, and she gathered strength, while the roses once more came to her cheeks. With the strong, glowing summer, she was strong, too; and then the silent, blissful hope came to his heart that his mother and Emmeline might yet be spared to him.

With the repentance of Horace, who had suffered much, and expiated his sins with agony, bitter as salt tears and a bruised soul could wring from him, came health of body and peace of mind to Emmeline; and the day on which she rested her head on the bosom of her husband, she said, "I am happy now, my own Horace. The shadow that came is gone. Blessed be God that sends the calm sunshine and the sweet rain after storm and tempest. We will never part more."

"Never," said Horace, "till the grave parts us, my own sweet wife; and may the time be long ere that hour comes."

"Tis strange," said a young man, as he staggered home from a party, "how evil communications corrupt good manners. I've been surrounded by tumblers all the evening, and now I'm a tumbler myself."

Log-Rolling and its Cost.

The manner of doing busines by Congress, calls for the condemnation of the country. By putting of all the bills to the close of the session, so much work has got to be done in so small a quantity of time, that not one man out of a dozen can tell what he is voting for. During the last three days of the session just closed, upwards of $10,000,000 were voted to this, that, and the other object, but what these objects were, not a score of members will know till they see the laws published in the Washington papers. To show the effect of this sort of legislation we would mention that a grant of $50,000 crept into one of the appropriation bills without any man, in either house, being aware how it got there. The present arrangement forces men to go things so blind, that it would not surprise us in the least to find in some bill for the relief of the Bull Head Indians, a section giving the fee simple of the Capital to some Jeremy Didler about Washington.

Another objection to the present mode of doing business, is the quantity of log-rolling connected with it. Bills no longer depend on their intrinsic merits for success, but on the merits of the bill to which they are attached as riders. If Mr. Gag wants an appropriation for the purpose of constructing a canal between Duck Creek and Mud Hole Inlet, he don't bring in a bill for that purpose, but he hunts up a law that should and will pass and fastens the Duck Creek Canal to it as an amendment—by this means a thousand outrages are committed on the Treasury, and a thousand bad laws are annnally forced into being.

To show the tendency of this sort of legislation, we would point to the civil and diplomatic bill—a bill that has been so loaded with amandments that you can't tell whether it is a law to defray the expenses of the government, or a statute to encourage saw filing. Within a week after it was brought into the Senate, it had over a hundred different and distinct laws attached to it in the way of postscripts, and so dovetailed together that a man could not vote against an hundred thousand dollar appropriation for the advancement of a lobster market, without endangering a bill on which the vitality of the whole government depended. The Harbor Bill, as originally reported, contained appropriations which only amounted to one and a half millions of dollars. Before it became a law, it contained appropriations which amounted to over five millions of dollars. The bill as originally reported, contained a few appropriations for a few national purposes. The bill as it passsed, contained, as we said before, over $5,000,000 of appropriations; three millions of which are devoted to matters of no more consequece to the nation than would a ship canal be between Sand Lake and Troy. The Navy Bill as passed by former Congresses, contained matters which related to the Navy and the Navy only. The Navy bill of this session is devoted to all possible subjects—beginning with firigates and leaving off with the bounty on mackerel and fishing smacks. To this bill the Senate in one day, tacked on amendments which filled sixteen pages of closely written foolscap—the cost of which amendments will amount to over $5,000,000. We say they may amount to $5,000,000, but there is not a Senator who voted for them can say, with any certainty, that they will not amount to double this sum. The way they rushed things on Monday, renders it morally impossible for any one to say what he did or what he did not do. As we said, the whole system is wrong, and well calculated to foster improvidence and corruption. The only cure for it is the veto of the President. Let the Executive withhold his approval to such monstrous bills for a single session, and they would die a natural death. A small dose of Andrew Jackson would do Congress more good, just now, than anything it has taken in twenty years. In these remarks we are attacking neither Whigs nor Democrats. Our strictures apply to the system and the system only. We care not which party is in power, so long as affairs are hurried through as they now are, there must be confusion and waste.—[*N. Y. Dutchman.*

Soliloquy of Rev. Mr. Parish.

"I've really an intolerable pain in my chest, sitting here in my study so long. I should like to work a little in my garden, but Deacon Smith thinks 'it looks secular.' Brother Clapp has offered me his horse and chaise, but Deacon Smith says people will talk if I ride about.—Well, I'll take a walk with my wife, (I suppose I can do *that.*) Here's a hole in my coat; (it's *all holes,*) I wonder where that *new* one is that wife's father sent me? Oh, I recollect, Deacon Smith says it will cause heart-burnings in the church if I wear so *fine* a broadcloth. Well, I'll go in my *old* one. No I can't, either, Deacon Smith says it's a reflection on the parish for me to go out in an old coat. I wish my people would pay me the last two quarter's salary. Think I'll write, and tell them how closely I'm cornered. No, it won't do; Deacon Smith says that if there's anything that deserves a rebuke, it's a minister who thinks about money. I wonder how long I had better make my sermon next Sabbath? Bro. Jones says *half an hour;* Bro. Clapp three quarters, and Deacon Smith says they don't get their money's worth if 'tis short of *an hour* long. Brother Jones is a temperance man—Bro. Clapp *isn't.* Bro. Harris is an abolitionist—Deacon Smith says *he's anti-fuss!* and wants the world to go on the *old fashioned* way!

"Wife has just been in, and wants to know 'if John may go a-fishing,' but Deacon Smith says *ministers boys never ought* to be born with the bump of destruction. Little Susy wants a doll, but Deacon Smith says it's too much like worshiping '*wooden idols,* forbid in the *scripters!*' My wife is worn out, and needs a servant, but Deacon Smith says ministers wives should never be weary in well-doing. Wife's sister made me a present of a book mark for the pulpit Bible, in the form of a *cross.* Deacon Smith says it's 'a rag of Popery!'—(mem. To have it *removed* before next Sunday.) I should like to exchange with Brother Putnam; but Deacon Smith says he has never made it *quite clear* to his mind, whether little dead babies are admitted to heaven *at nine months and two days —or two months and nine days!* Bro. Hill, too, is a very good man; but Deacon Smith says he ought never to have entered the ministry, *if he couldn't get the curl out of his hair!* Really, I'm quite puzzled to find out the *path of duty.*" FANNY FERN.

—[*N. Y. Dutchman.*

LATER FROM CALIFORNIA.—*New Orleans, Sept.* 4.—The steamer *Daniel Webster*, from San Juan, arrived here this morning. She brings San Francisco dates to the 14th August.

Business generally was steady, and the mines were yielding abundantly.

A duel had taken place at Sacramento city, between Mr. E. Gilbert, late member of Congress, and genearl Denvers. They fought with pistols. Mr. Gilbert was killed. The origin of the difficulty arose out of political differences.

Typographical Mistake.—A printer in New York, intending to strike off a lot of posters announcing a large Tea Sale in that city, printed them with "*Sea Tale*" for a head, which filled the auction-room with regular salts, ready to hear the particulars.